

**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS  
December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

The Park Commission of the City of Leon Valley, Texas met on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2016, at 7:00 p.m., at 6421 Evers Road, Leon Valley, Texas, for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:

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**LEON VALLEY PARK COMMISSION MEETING, 7:00 P.M.**

**1. Call the Meeting to Order and Determine a Quorum is Present.**

Chairman Roger Christensen called the Park Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., with the following Park Commissioners in attendance: Vice-Chairwoman Jackie Walton, and Commissioners Danielle Bolton, Stephen Parker, Belinda Ealy, Linda Tarin, and Carolyn Gabriel. Absent and excused were Commissioners Benay Cacciatore and Kathy Hill. Also present were City Staff member Melinda Moritz and resident Robert Jarzombek.

**2. Review and Approval of the November 10, 2016 Regular Park Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Commissioner Ealy asked for a correction to the second page, fourth paragraph, to add the word "had". Commissioner Walton made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2016 regular Park Commission meeting, with the correction, which was seconded by Commissioner Parker. The minutes, with the correction, were approved unanimously.

**3. Citizens to be Heard**

Chairman Christensen asked that the Pledge of Allegiance be placed on the agenda from now on, so as to remind the Commission to conduct the Pledge.

**4. Report on Activities that Impact the Park or Access to the Park**

**A. Discussion and Possible Action – Amplifiers in City Parks and City Noise Ordinance (LV Police Department)**

Chairman Christensen postponed this item while awaiting the arrival of the Police Chief.

**B. Discussion and Possible Action – Deer Feeding Policy (Park Commissioners)**

Chairman Christensen reminded the Commissioners to keep their comments concise and to the point. He then went on to explain that he had performed a reconnaissance at the parks and had observed two active and two non-active

**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

deer feeding sites in the Leon Valley Huebner-Onion Natural Area Park (LVHONA). He noted that, in his opinion, this type of feeding activity was not of sufficient negative nutritional value to make a difference. He noted that there were no active deer feeding sites at the other parks.

Commissioner Parker spoke of the watering trough that was sometimes filled for the deer at the LVHONA. The Chairman stated that he considered that to be one of the sites that were inactive. Commissioner Parker went on to state that this area was where he had taken the pictures of deer he had had so many comments about. He then explained that he read the two ordinances regarding deer from the other cities that prohibited deer feeding, and that he agreed there should be some type of policy in place. He then asked if the deer feeding subcommittee that had been formed had taken any action. He stated that he had heard of a complaint from one of the Monte Robles Park neighborhood residents about too many deer in their yard. Staff member Moritz explained she had received that complaint, but that the complainant then stated his wife fed the deer each day, which drew them to the yard. Commissioner Parker then stated that he liked the Town of Hollywood Park Deer Ordinance the best, as it allowed the Mayor to order a contractor to trap and remove deer when deemed necessary.

Chairman Christensen stated he thought the Commission duties were limited to making recommendations for the park system and not the entire city.

Commissioner Parker stated that the Town of Hollywood Park ordinance called for violations of their ordinance to be Class C misdemeanors and that it allowed some deer feeding. He stated that he agreed with the policy, but not with the Class C misdemeanor designation.

Chairman Christensen stated that he didn't think two deer feeding sites were enough to warrant a large enough problem to enact an ordinance and that any recommendations from the Park Commission would be for deer feeding in parklands only.

Commissioner Ealy stated that she had also seen deer feeding in the park, but that she had observed persons feeding deer on other property. She stated that she thought such an ordinance would be highly unenforceable. She then stated that she thought deer feeding in certain areas of the park might be allowable, as long as the feeding did not contribute to damage to the environment. She noted that she had seen 45-50 deer, which she considered to be a small amount. She



**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

explained that she had been worried that Leon Valley might have a deer overpopulation problem, but not after seeing the size of the current herd.

Commissioner Parker stated that any recommendation they made would be for the park system only and that would not solve the city-wide problem and that the problem was likely to increase over time. He stated that he would like to see an all-encompassing policy. He then stated that even if such a city-wide policy was developed, it probably could not be enforced.

Chairman Christensen then addressed the Commission, asking if it was the consensus of the Commission that the duties of Park Commission did not include recommending ordinances that affected the entire city. Staff member Moritz stated that even though the Commission was technically limited to making recommendations for the parks, they could give a recommendation to the Council to have a city-wide deer feeding policy created.

Chairman Christensen explained stated that one of the recommendations in the Huebner-Onion Homestead Master Plan was to install a wildlife viewing platform in the Natural Area. He noted that doing so would probably include some provision for feeding and watering, as that would bring the wildlife closer to the platform. Commissioner Parker commented that if that were the case, the watering trough should be filled consistently.

Commissioner Ealy stated that the food she saw being provided was not nutritionally complete and included such items as bread. She explained that if a deer feeding policy was established, it should include some management of the types of food being offered.

Chairman Christensen noted that, while he was not an expert in deer management, he did hunt regularly in the past in Iowa and that the difference in the size of deer in Iowa as opposed to Texas was that the nutrition source was probably due to an abundance of corn.

Commissioner Parker asked staff how many complaints had been received regarding the number of deer. Staff member Moritz replied that she had personally received two complaints – the one from Monte Robles Park and one from a resident on Grass Valley that complained the deer were eating all the fruit off his fruit trees. She further explained that she had given the Grass Valley resident some tips on keeping the deer out of his yard. Commissioner Parker then stated that after reading the ordinances from both Hollywood Park and

**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

Lakeway, he thought the City should have some type of deer feeding policy in place.

Chairman Christensen then asked if there were any other comments or questions from the Commission. Hearing none and after not receiving a motion, he stated that since there was no consensus on an action, the Commission would move on to other business.

**A. Discussion and Possible Action – Amplifiers in City Parks and City Noise Ordinance (LV Police Department)**

Police Chief Salvaggio introduced himself to the Commissioners and then presented portions of the noise ordinance, explaining that per the ordinance, none of it applies to activities in the parks, as long as other users don't complain. He further explained that there is no definition of what is disturbing to others at the park, and it does not give a decibel level limit to the activities in a park. He stated that the law should be rewritten if the code is to apply to activities in the park.

Chairman Christensen asked what would happen if someone in the park was disturbed by another person making loud noises in the park. Chief Salvaggio explained that the Officer would probably write a citation, but that the citation would not stand up in court. He then stated that normally, if a person is asked to turn down an amplifier in the park, they voluntarily comply without having to be issued a citation.

Commissioner Gabriel asked if a person in the park could call the Police if they felt they were being disturbed by excessive noise. Chief Salvaggio reiterated that they could and that an Officer would respond. Commissioner Parker noted that the violation would not be concrete and therefore subjective. Chief Salvaggio answered yes.

Commissioner Walton asked if the Park Commission should recommend changes to the law to add a decibel level limit. Chief Salvaggio said he would recommend adding a decibel level limit and a distance limit. Commissioner Walton asked that if the changes were made would the law stand. Chief Salvaggio answered yes.

Chief Salvaggio then stated that he would recommend making the park noise regulations the same as regulations for city-wide violations. He suggested putting



**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

language in the code for the type of amplification, such as wattage, decide upon a decibel level limit that would be acceptable, a distance limit, and insert a definition of "park".

Commissioner Walton reminded the Commission that city events would still have to be exempted from the code.

Commissioner Parker made a motion to recommend to the City Council that the Noise Ordinance be revised to include the parks, define a "park" and a "disturbance", add an acceptable decibel level limit, add a distance measurement, exempt city events, and add language that would allow people other than park users to file a complaint about excessive noise in the park. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walton, and the motion carried unanimously.

**C. Report and Possible Action - Natural Area Park Damage and Huebner Gravesite Restoration Project (M. Moritz)**

Staff member Moritz addressed the Commission and reported that there had been damage to the trees in the center of the LVHONA. She further explained that the damage was most probably caused by mountain bicycle enthusiasts trying to make more trails through the area. She explained that the only signage in the park is at the entrance by Raymond Rimkus Park and that people probably thought it was just a large vacant parcel of land near a creek. She noted that at Leon Creek, bicyclists had made their own trails as well. She stated that Public Works and the Fire Department had put up trail cameras that would capture pictures and videos of persons in that area and that new signs were being made for all the entrances to notify people that this was a Natural Area Park and would list the regulations, to include not disturbing the wildlife or vegetation, and to stay on the trails. She mentioned that Public Works employees would be reviewing the camera pictures and would report any suspicious activities to the Police Department.

She then explained that she had been researching options for the restoration of the Huebner gravesite and had been drawn to an 1800's style cemetery fence, as this would be in keeping with the period. She further explained that the City of San Antonio's 300<sup>th</sup> year celebration would be held in 2018 and that she wanted to have the gravesite restored prior to any events which tourists might attend as a part of visiting historic sites. She explained that the City Manager had suggested asking the Leon Valley Economic Development Corporation for the

**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

money for the repairs, as this would be an event that would draw tourists and therefore more sales tax in our city limits.

**5. Commissioner and Staff Comments**

Commissioner Ealy stated that she was pleased with the turnout at the Holiday Lighting Ceremony. She mentioned that Public Works had done a great job with the lights and the clearing out of the park after the flooding, and that their work was very noticeable. She also thanked the Community Events Committee for another great event.

Commissioner Tarin mentioned that the cannon shot at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July scared her and the children at the event. She then thanked Chairman Christensen, Staff member Moritz for their work with the Park Commission, and citizen Robert Jarzombek for always being in attendance.

Commissioner Parker wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Walton wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Commissioner Gabriel asked if the Park Commission would have some say in the operation of the Forest Oaks pool. She stated that wanted to assure the Park Commission was able to make recommendations for both pools.

Chairman Christensen stated that the Silo Park fitness equipment was finally being installed and that Staff was negotiating with the church next door to the park for a sidewalk easement that would allow park users to come into the park from Huebner Road, that gabion mattresses had been installed at Raymond Rimkus Park across from the library and that they had held up nicely after the recent flooding, that he was still concerned about security at the Shadow Mist park site, as it was subject to dumping being open. He gave a brief update on the Bexar County LC-17 flood control project, stating that they were to begin construction at the end of January, and then he suggested that we revised the park brochure to include all parks.

Commissioner Parker agreed, stating that the website also needed to reflect information about all the parks.

Chairman Christensen then wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**PARK COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS**  
**December 13, 2016 MEETING MINUTES**

**6. Adjourn.**

There being no further business, Commissioner Parker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Walton, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

  
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**Roger Christensen - Chairman**

1-11-17  
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**Date**